

Message Text

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O R 262046Z JUL 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, XC, US

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S VISIT PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

REF: PEKING ,465, PEKING 1522

1. DEPARTMENT STROMGLY HOPES MFA WILL RECONSIDER BOTH ITS LIMIT OF 20 NEWS PERSONNEL TRAVELLING TO CHINA TO COVER SECRETARY'S VISIT AND ITS PROHIBITION ON NON-U.S CITIZENS WORKING FOR U.S. AGENCIES. THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR RESPONSE TO DIRECTOR MA. SEPTTEL PROVIDES UNIFIED LIST OF JOURNALISTS.

2. YOU SHOULD MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS IN RESPONSE TO DIRECTOR MA:

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A) SECRETARY'S VISIT IS FIRST U.S. FOREIGN MINISTERIAL TRIP TO CHINA OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND U.S. MEDIA ATTACH HIGH IMPORTANCE TO IT. NUMBER OF NATIONAL NEWS ORGANIZATIONS REQUESTING TO COVER THIS MEETING IS LARGER THAN IN PREVIOUS TRIPS.

B) ON THIS VISIT, WE WOULD HOPE NOT TO FORCE U.S.

TELEVISION NETWORKS TO POOL COVERAGE WHICH, FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW, RESTRICTS QUALITY, AMOUNT AND INDIVIDUALITY

OF COVERAGE. LIMITATION TO NUMBER OF TRAVELLING PRESS STATED BY MFA WOULD REQUIRE TV POOLING WE WANT TO AVOID.

C) FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NUMBER OF NEWSPAPER JOURNALISTS ACCOMPANYING NOT BE CUT TO POINT WHERE GEOGRAPHICAL OR POLITICAL DIVERSITY OF PRINT MEDIA COVERAGE IN THE U.S. SUFFERS.

D) WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CUT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PRESS TRAVELLING WITH THE SECRETARY OR FROM HONG KONG TO 29. THIS REDUCES EACH TV NETWORK BY ONE STAFFER, BUT STILL ALLOWS EACH TO PROVIDE COVERAGE. WE HAVE ALSO CUT TWO PRINT MEDIA (READERS DIGEST AND NEW REPUBLIC). WE HOPE AND STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT MFA NOT INSIST WE CUT NUMBER BELOW THIS FIGURE.

E) ALTHOUGH ONLY U.S. NEWS ORGANIZATIONS ARE BEING INCLUDED IN OUR REQUEST, NON-U.S. CITIZENS ARE REGULAR AND SOMETIMES CRUCIAL STAFF MEMBERS FOR AMERICAN NEWS AGENCIES. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN TECHNICAL CREWS, BUT IS ALSO FREQUENTLY THE CASE WITH CORRESPONDENTS. IF MFA ACCEPTS COMPROMISE OF 29 PRESS, 7 WILL BE NON-U.S. CITIZENS. YOU SHOULD INFORM MFA THAT WE STRONGLY REQUEST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THESE JOURNALISTS BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE. (ABC'S PETER JENNINGS IS ONLY FOREIGN NATIONAL JOURNALIST ON LIST; SIX TV TECHNICIANS ARE FOREIGN NATIONALS.)

3. FYI - IF MFA INFORMS USLO THAT OUR REDUCTION TO 29 PRESS IS STILL ABOVE THE "MAXIMUM PERMISSABLE NUMBER", WE ARE PREPARED TO COUNTERPROPOSE A FIGURE OF 24, WHICH WILL REQUIRE POOLING OF BOTH TV AND STILL PHOTO AGENCIES. HOWEVER, SINCE REDUCTION BELOW THAT FIGURE WOULD CAUSE REAL PROBLEMS IN SELECTION OF INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS, USLO SHOULD NOT AT THIS POINT INDICATE TO MFA THAT WE ARE READY TO GO LOWER THAN 29. END FYI.

4. RE PARA 4 PEKING 1522, WHAT DOES MA MEAN BY "PERSONAL DATA AND PHOTOGRAPHS, BEYOND THAT CONTAINED IN VISA APPLICATION AND PASSPORTS WHICH WE FURNISHED PRCLO LAST WEEK? VANCE

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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Format: TEL
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